THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) No, Sir. As reported by Coal India Limited, contractor's labourers working at Basundhara Project, M.C.L. Sundargarh, are being paid minimum wages and other statutory benefits.

(c) Does not arise in view of reply to part (a) and (b).

Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill

†2394. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether workers union functioning in the industry have demanded the withdrawal of Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) Government's reaction on this demand; and

(d) the points of the said bill on which objections are being raised and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, *inter-alia,* seeks to allow coal mining to a company, not including a foreign company, either for own consumption, sale or for any other purpose in accordance with the prospecting license or mining lease or sub-lease. The Trade Unions oppose the proposed amendment mainly on the ground that it would lead to privatization of the coal mining sector and a recurrence of the pre-nationalisation ills of the coal sector like slaughter mining. The Government is of the view that the proposed amendment has adequate safeguards to check any recurrence of pre-nationalization ills that affected the coal mining sector. The proposed amendment would encourage private sector participation, bring the necessary investment, technology and reduce the increasing gap between the demand and supply of coal which threatens the Energy security of the country. The amendment would not automatically lead to privatization of the coal mining sector and the Public Sector would continue to play its role. The Government had

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

constituted a Group of Ministers (Gom) to, *inter alia,* look into the matter. The Gom constituted earlier had held discussions with Trade Unions.

Coal Mines Nationalisation (Amendment) Bill

2395. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have prepared a draft Coal Mines Nationalisation (Amendment) Bill to facilitate private participation in the coal sector which enables Government to give coal blocks to private companies for captive mining;

(b) if so, the salient features of the proposed amendment;

(c) whether consultations have been made with the representatives concerned in this regard; and

(d) if so, the outcome of the consultations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES (DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) The Department of Coal has introduced a Bill, namely the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2000 in the Rajya Sabha on 24.04.2000 to amend the Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973. This Bill *inter alia,* seeks to allow a company, not including a foreign company, coal mining either for own consumption, sale or for any other purpose in accordance with the prospecting licenss or mining lease or sub-lease.

(c) and (d) the Standing Committee on Energy which considered and recommended the Bill to Parliament held wide ranging consultations with representatives of all stake holders. However, the Bill has been opposed by the Trade Unions. The Government had constituted a Group of Ministers (Gom) on coal to, *inter alia,* look into the matter. The Gom consitituted earlier had held discussions with the representatives of the Trade Unions.

Use of obsolete technology in mining

2396. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Rs. 4000 crores of FDI has been approved in the mining sector, recently;